

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-03 DODE-00 AID-05 MC-02 EB-07 SS-15

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9421

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN JOSE 0752

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, CS

SUBJECT: FMS CASH SALE REQUEST

REF: STATE 35184

1. EMBASSY HAS BEEN AWARE OF GENESIS OF THIS REQUEST FOR SOME TIME THROUGH NORMAL MILGRP LIAISON. I HAVE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON GOCR REQUEST TO WHICH I WOULD PREFER HAVE DEPARTMENT'S REACTION BEFORE EMBASSY UNDERTAKES ANY FURTHER CONSULTATIONS WITH MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SECURITY ABOUT GOCR REASONS FOR THESE PRUCHASES.

2. THE SIZE OF THE ORDER FOR M-1 CARBINES AND RELATED EQUIPMENT IS DUE TO GOCR DECISION TO UPGRADE AND STANDARIZE EQUIPMENT FOR ALL PUBLIC FORCES. THIS REQUEST THEREFORE INCLUDES ARMS FOR RURAL GUARD AS WELL AS REVIL GUARD. AS SUCH, I CONSIDER REQUEST REASONABLE AND NOT EXCESSIVE AND CONCUR IN DEPARTMENT'S DECISION EXPEDITE PROCESSING OF ITEMS ONE THROUGH SIX.

3. WITH RESPECT TO CHEMICAL AGENTS, PROJECTILES FOR PISTOLS, AND GRENADES AND LAUNCHERS (ITEMS SEVEN THROUGH 13), I DO NOT CONSIDER THESE UNREASONABLE REQUESTS FOR PUBLIC FORCES, BUT I AM CONCERNED ABOUT POSSIBLE AD-
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VERSE POLITICAL REACTIONS AT SOME FUTURE DATE TO USG

ASSOCIATION WITH THESE PARTICULAR TYPES OF EQUIPMENT. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE AT A TIME WHEN THERE HAS BEEN A FLURRY OF CONCERN ABOUT PUBLIC ORDER IN SAN JOSE AND WE MAY SEE MORE OF THIS CONCERN. AT THE SAME TIME I THINK WE SHOULD BE RESPONSIVE TO REASONABLE REQUEST FROM A FRIENDLY GOVERNMENT AND IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT WE AVOID A PATRONIZING POSTURE IN DECIDING WHAT IS UNREASONABLE.

4. FOR ALL THESE REASONS I WOULD IDEALLY PREFER A USG POSTURE OF RAPIDLY RESPONDING TO REQUESTS ONE THROUGH SIX AND AT THE SAME TIME BEING IN A POSITION TO SAY TO THE GOCR CONVINCINGLY THAT WE CANNOT AND DO NOT ANY LONGER PROVIDE THE OTHER ITEMS REQUESTED UNDER FMS. TO BE DEFENSIBLE HERE, THIS ANSWER WOULD HAVE TO MEAN THAT WE DO NOT OR WILL NOT IN THE FUTURE PROVIDE SUCH EQUIPMENT UNDER FMS TO OTHER COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA EITHER, AND SPECIFICALLY IN CENTRAL AMERICA. I DOUBT THAT THIS IS THE CASE, ALTHOUGH I AM AWARE THAT WE ARE TRYING BROADLY TO MOVE AWAY FROM FMS CASH SALES IN FAVOR OF COMMERCIAL SALES.

5. WE KNOW FROM OUR EARLIER CONVERSATIONS WITH THE MINISTRY THAT THE CHEMICAL AGENTS AND PROJECTILES ARE INTENDED TO BUILD A PARAMILITARY CAPABILITY FOR SUPPRESSION OF POTENTIAL TERRORISM. ANY USE OF THE GRENADES WOULD BE PARTICULARLY CONTROVERSIAL HERE, BUT I CANNOT SAY THAT IN THESE TIMES IT IS UNREASONABLE FOR THE GOCR TO HAVE THEM. I WOULD SIMPLY PREFER THAT THE USG NOT BE ASSOCIATED WITH THEM IF THAT CAN BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH A PLAUSIBLE EXCUSE WHICH DOES NOT DRAW INVIDIOUS COMPARISONS WITH OUR TREATMENT OF NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES.

6. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE GOCR HAS ALREADY BEEN INFORMED IN WASHINGTON THAT THE CHEMICAL AGENTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE UNDER FMS CASH SALE. I WOULD APPRECIATE VERIFICATION OF THIS AND DEPARTMENT'S COMMENTS ON OTHER POINTS RAISED ABOVE.

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